

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is requested. Claims 25, 27, 29-44 and 46-50 are in the case.

I. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

It is noted with appreciation that the subject matter of claims 28, 29 and 31-42 is allowable. In light of that indication, and in order to advance prosecution, claim 25 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 28. Claims 26 and 28 have been cancelled without prejudice to pursuing the subject matter of those claims in a separate continuing case.

Since the claims have been amended to recite subject matter previously claimed, and as the number of claims has not been increased and no new issues are raised, it is believed the amendments should be entered and considered at this stage of prosecution. Such action is respectfully requested.

II. THE ANTICIPATION REJECTIONS

Claims 25-26, 43-44, 46 and 50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Muskett (US 6,255,527). Claims 25-26, 43-44 and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Watson *et al.* (US 5,831,120) (Watson).

In response, it is believed that the claim amendments presented herewith render the anticipation rejections moot. Withdrawal of the anticipation rejections is respectfully requested.

III. THE OBVIOUSNESS REJECTION

Claims 27, 30 and 47-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Muskett. Claims 27, 30 and 47 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Watson. In response, it is believed that the claim amendments presented herewith render the obviousness rejections moot. Withdrawal of the obviousness rejections is respectfully requested.

Favorable action is awaited.

Respectfully submitted,

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